

RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Quarterly

VOLUME 41 No. 2

2011

Rutland in the Civil War (Part 1)



WIKIPEDIA US-MOH-1862

*The Medal of Honor
for Distinguished Service During the War of the Rebellion*

About the Editor

Robert Ranftle joined the Rutland Historical Society in 2009, upon moving to Rutland. He is a member of the Exhibit Committee working on the multi-year Civil War commemorative project.

For some time, he has gathered and reviewed data for the project, and has also contributed to the Civil War exhibition that is currently on display at the Center Street building. This is the first publication that he has compiled and produced at the Society.

Introduction

During the year 2011, and for the next four years, the Rutland Historical Society will be commemorating Rutland's participation and experience in the War of the Rebellion (the Civil War).

This issue of the Rutland Historical Society Quarterly is wholly dedicated to the Civil War. Subsequent issues will also be dedicated to the war, either wholly or in part.

During that time, Quarterlies will present materials about a wide range of subjects related to the war: the buildup, Rutland's response to the call for volunteers, the home front, personal letters and stories, and other articles of interest.

This issue contains the following topics (articles):

Medal of Honor – Civil War

Wheelock G. Veazey

William Y.W. Ripley

Charles Augustus Thompson

Samuel Joseph Churchill

Grand Army of the Republic and Memorial Hall

Rutland Notables Who Served

William T. Nichols

Levi G. Kingsley

"The Southern Odyssey of a Rutland Son's Family" is also included. This is the story of the scion of a noted Rutland family who served the Confederacy, and the well-known Rutlander who healed the wounds at the end.

This will be the first of a number of human-interest and personal stories which will appear throughout the multi-year commemoration period.

Rutland in the Civil War

(Part 1)

By Robert Ranftle

Medal of Honor - Civil War

During the Revolutionary War, General Washington awarded a “Badge of Military Merit” to three of his soldiers. Medals for bravery and meritorious service were also awarded during the Mexican-American War.

The Medal of Honor, as such, was established during and for the Civil War. Both the Navy and the Army made provisions for official recognition of meritorious service early in the conflict, and subsequently Congress made the Medal of Honor a permanent decoration.

The award is conferred “under Section 6, of Act of Congress, approved 3 March 1863, for Distinguished Service during the War of the Rebellion”.

Since its inception, over 3,400 MOHs have been awarded for a total of 20 campaigns. There were 1,522 medals awarded for service during the Civil War.

Rutland Awardees

There were 62 Vermonters among the awardees during the Civil War. It has been established that four of these 62 have ties to Rutland. Their backgrounds and experiences differ, but they all made their mark both here and on the battlefield. Details of the citations and other relevant information are provided for these brave men.

[Rutland connections to the awardees are noted in the summaries that follow.]¹

¹ Details and statistics about the medal awards to Vermonters are from: Vermont in the Civil War, www.vermontcivilwar.org/index.php and U.S. Army Center of Military History www.history.army.mil/moh.html.



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Wheelock G. Veazey

Wheelock Veazey was born and raised in New Hampshire and attended Dartmouth College. In 1860 he opened a law practice in Springfield, Vt. At the outset of the Civil War, he enlisted as a private in the 3rd Vt. Regiment (882 men) and was thereafter elected Captain. Within four months of enlisting, he had advanced to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel at the age of 25. In September, 1862, Mr. Veazey was promoted to Colonel, and assumed command of the 16th Infantry.

He was awarded the Medal of Honor at Gettysburg, as commander of one of the three regiments of the 2nd Brigade that broke Pickett's charge. For a brief time, with General Stannard wounded, Colonel Veazey assumed command of the 2nd Brigade. His deteriorating health caused him to decline promotion to General, and he was mustered out on 10 August 1863.

Mr. Veazey opened a law practice in Rutland after the Civil War. He became a long time and prominent resident of Rutland, and went on to become a successful lawyer and law partner of Redfield Proctor. He also served as Chief Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court, trustee of Norwich University and Dartmouth College, and Commander-in-Chief of the national Grand Army of the Republic (GAR).

Mr Veazey died on 22 March 1898. He is buried with his wife Julia Beard Veazey in Arlington National Cemetery.²

Rank and Unit: Colonel, 16th Vermont Infantry.

Place and date: Gettysburg, PA, 3 Jul 1863

[Mr. Veazey came to Rutland after the Civil War.]

Date of Issue: 8 Sep 1891

Citation: Rapidly assembled his regiment and charged the enemy's flank; charged front under heavy fire, and charged and destroyed a Confederate brigade, all this with new troops in their first battle.

² Rutland Historical Society Quarterly, Volume XXV No. 2, 1995. This publication is dedicated to the distinguished life of Mr. Veazey including his Civil War experiences



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William Y.W. Ripley

[The Ripley family, and William Y. W. Ripley, are prominent in many articles that have been produced by the Rutland Historical Society. Moreover, the Ripley family as a whole and their lives during the Civil War, and contributions that they made, will be the subject of a piece that will appear in a future Civil War Quarterly. Thus, this brief biography concentrates only on Captain Ripley's Civil War experiences.]

Captain William Young Warren Ripley was the first man in Vermont to volunteer officially for the Union Army. His speech at the old Rutland Town Hall on Main Street inspired the Rutland Light Guards, of which he was commanding officer, to volunteer as Company K of the 1st Regiment of Vermont Volunteers in the Civil War as of May, 1861. The Light Guards as a unit, commanded by Captain Ripley were included in Company K of the 1st Vermont Regiment. This was a 90-day service, which ended on 15 August 1861.

Subsequently, Captain Ripley was appointed Lieutenant Colonel in the 1st Regiment U.S. Sharpshooters, an elite force consisting of the most expert rifle shots in the North, and was in command of this unit in all the battles of the Peninsula Campaign. In several instances, he distinguished himself by personal bravery and gallant conduct.

At the battle of Malvern Hill, a resounding Union victory, he was severely wounded. He was appointed Colonel of the 10th Vermont Regiment, but was unable to accept due to his wounds. He left the service on 6 August 1862.³

Rank and Unit: Lieutenant Colonel, 1st U.S. Sharpshooters.

Place and date: Malvern Hill, VA, 1 Jul 1862.

Enlisted: Rutland, Vermont

Buried: Evergreen Cemetery, Rutland.

Date of Issue: 11 Mar 1893.

Citation: At a critical moment brought up two regiments, which he led against the enemy himself, being severely wounded.

³ Rutland Historical Society Quarterly, "The Rutland Light Guards", Volume X No. 2.

Charles Augustus Thompson



(MILITARY TIMES HALL OF VALOR)
<http://militarytimes.com/citations-medals-awards/>

Mr. Thompson came to Rutland after the war. He has been identified with several business interests in Rutland and the surrounding area. He was at one time superintendent of the Gilson & Woodfin marble works at West Rutland. He was also employed at the Rutland Cracker Company.⁴

He is buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Rutland. Services at the grave were under the charge of the Roberts post of the Grand Army of the Republic.

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Rank and Unit: | Sergeant, Co. D, 17th Michigan Infantry |
| Place and date: | Spotsylvania, VA, 12 May 1864. |
| Died: | 24 Aug 1900, Rutland. |
| Buried: | Evergreen Cemetery, Rutland. |
| Date of Issue: | 27 Jul 1896. |
| Citation: | After the regiment was surrounded and all resistance seemed useless, fought single-handed for the colors and refused to give them up until he had appealed to his superior officers. |

⁴ Rutland Daily Herald, August 25, 1900.

Samuel Joseph Churchill



(SAMUEL JACKSON CHURCHILL RESERVE TRAINING CENTER)
www.312armyband.com/aboutus/trainingcenter

Samuel Joseph Churchill was born in Hubbardton in Rutland County, and was raised in the area. For a while, during his teen years, he lived with Deacon Luke Ward in West Rutland, where he worked and attended school. He left the area for Illinois in 1861. He died on 3 June 1932.⁵

The Samuel J. Churchill Army Reserve Training Center contains a narrative of Mr. Churchill's military service and civilian life.⁶

Rank and Unit: Corporal, Co. G., 2nd Illinois Light Artillery

Place and date: Nashville, Tenn., 15 Dec 1864

Born: Rutland County, Vermont, 1 Nov 1842
(lived for a time in West Rutland)

Date of Issue: 20 Jan 1897

Citation: When the fire of the enemy's batteries compelled the men of his detachment for a short time to seek shelter, he stood manfully at his post and for some minutes worked his gun alone.

⁵ www.312armyband.com/aboutus/trainingcenter

⁶ www.312armyband.com/aboutus/trainingcenter

Grand Army of the Republic and Memorial Hall

“The development of an organization of Union veterans was the post-war conception of Benjamin Franklin Stephenson of Springfield, Illinois. The Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) quickly became the pre-eminent veterans’ organization formed at the close of the Civil War. Membership reached its peak in 1890, when over 400,000 members were reported. By then the GAR had well over seven thousand posts, ranging in size from fewer than two dozen members in small towns, to more than a thousand in some cities.

The Vermont Commandery of the G.A.R. was established on 23 October 1868. In 1875, there were 13 posts, with 561 members. There were 151 posts at one time or another, with the largest number of posts 113, in 1892 and 1894; the highest numbered post was 117, several numbers were reused as posts came and went. The largest number of members was 5,473, in 1890.”⁷

“The GAR held an annual ‘National Encampment’ every year from 1866 to 1949. At that final encampment in Indianapolis, Indiana, the few surviving members voted to retain the existing officers in place until the organization’s dissolution; Theodore Penland of Oregon, the GAR’s Commander at the time, was therefore its last. In 1956, after the death of the last member, Albert Woolson, the GAR was formally dissolved.”⁸

Rutland Area Posts of the GAR⁹

The Rutland area had two posts of the GAR: the George T. Roberts Post (Rutland) and the John T. Sennott Post (West Rutland).

The Roberts post was chartered on 11 November 1868. In 1880, with 180 members, it was the largest GAR post in the state.

The Sennott Post of West Rutland was chartered in 1882, in the honor and memory of Lieutenant John T. Sennott, who was killed in action at Gettysburg, 2 July 1863.

In 1883, construction of the permanent Memorial Hall was begun at 151 West Street.

In 1931, with decreasing membership in the GAR and with needs to expand downtown Rutland, the Memorial Hall building was torn down.

⁷ Vermont in the Civil War, VermontCivilWar.org/index.php

⁸ Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Grand_Army_of_the_Republic

⁹ RHS Quarterly Volume X, No. 2 “The Rutland Light Guards”



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HISTORY OF RUTLAND COUNTY, VERMONT - SMITH & RANN

Above: The individuals for whom the Rutland-area posts of the GAR are named: Lieutenant John T. Sennott (left) and Colonel George T. Roberts.

Memorial Hall in Downtown Rutland (1886-1931)

Memorial Hall, on the site of today's Rutland Post Office and Federal Building, was built to be a lasting tribute to the Rutland men who gave so much to save the union.

Unfortunately priorities change and the building, which was erected in 1886, was demolished in 1931.

The following is a brief history of the construction, use and demolition of Memorial Hall.

"In 1883, the Selectmen of Rutland Town were authorized to buy a plot of ground and to plan a building. A citizens committee was appointed to cooperate with the selectmen."

"The town voted \$25,000 and a public subscription raised funds to buy the Holmes tract.....Marble was donated by the many marble companies in the town."

"'Slight nothing and hurry nothing – so that 100 years may look down and find everything in its exact place.'"

"That was the order of the Selectmen of the Town of Rutland in 1886, when construction of Memorial Hall was started, and it quite likely reflected the attitude of the citizenry of the community of that time. Less than forty-five years later the attitude must have changed considerably

for on 10 March 1931 nothing but the foundation of this memorial remained.”¹⁰

Rutland Historical Society Display honoring the GAR and Rutland Memorial Hall

The Rutland Historical Society has in its possession the windows from the Rutland Memorial Hall building. Starting this year, the main floor of the society will house an exhibit commemorating the anniversary of the start of the Civil War. Included in that exhibit will be one of the windows.

The picture on this page shows the window, and part of the rest of the exhibit. The display will be in place at least for the rest of 2011.



Old Memorial Hall Window, backlit, showing the names of the two posts for which the Hall was dedicated.

¹⁰ From an account in the Rutland Herald of March 11, 1931, loaned through the courtesy of Lawrence Udart.



Above: Photograph of the Rutland Memorial Hall. This building, demolished in 1931 was on the site of the present Rutland City main post office building.

George T. Roberts

“George T. Roberts was born in the town of Clarendon, Rutland County, Vt., on the 3d day of October, 1824. He belonged to a family of military traditions on both sides, being the third son of the late Benjamin Roberts, of Manchester, Vt., and a grandson of General Christopher Roberts of Revolutionary memory. His mother’s maiden name was Sophia Hodges. She was the third daughter of Dr. Silas Hodges who served as a surgeon in the Continental army, and was for some time in the military family of General Washington. When about four years of age his parents removed to Manchester, in which town he spent most of his boyhood. In 1861 he was a lieutenant in the Rutland Light Guards, which went out as one of the companies of the First Vermont Regiment. He served in the field with that regiment until the expiration of its term of service. He afterward took an active part in recruiting the First Vermont Regiment of Cavalry, and was offered a position in that organization, which he declined. When the Seventh Regiment was organized and mustered into service in February, 1862, he was offered its colonelcy by Governor Holbrook, which offer he accepted.”¹¹

¹¹ History of Rutland County, Vermont – Smith & Rann

Colonel Roberts was killed at the battle of Baton Rouge, while leading his troops in action. The reaction to his death is shown in an article published in the New Orleans Pelia:

“The Seventh Vermont Regiment, which had just -returned from severe service at Vicksburg, participated in the battle of Baton Rouge. It is sufficient evidence that they were at their post discharging faithfully the trust reposed in them, that their gallant colonel, George T. Roberts, fell mortally wounded in the thickest of the fight. He was a true patriot and an honorable, high-minded man. He first went into the service as a lieutenant in Company A, of the First Vermont Volunteers. When the Seventh was called for he was tendered the colonelcy, and in every particular has proved the selection a good one, and though dying in a glorious cause, his loss will be severely felt, both by his regiment and his many friends in his native State where he was so well and so favorably known.”¹²

John T. Sennott

John T. Sennott was born in Ireland, and was a schoolteacher at East Rutland. Upon joining, he was immediately elected Lieutenant. He served with the 13th Regiment and died at Gettysburg of wounds received while leading his men in battle. The following is a recounting of his service by a fellow member of Company A, Heman W. Allen.

“He was of fine physique, commanding in appearance, always gentlemanly, kind and generous, beloved and respected by every man in the company and regiment. It was my privilege to know him more intimately than most of the privates; my duties as company clerk bringing me in closer relations with the officers of the company than would have otherwise been possible, and I do not recall an instance of impatience or injustice on his part towards any members of the company.

During the flank attack Of July 3d he was struck in the forehead by a piece of shell and died a day or two after in a hospital and was buried at Gettysburg. I was near him at the time, we were lying behind the slight protection of rails, etc., which we had gathered together and had been in that uncomfortable position for some time; the men were uneasy, some of them would stand up to gaze over the rails to see what the conditions were in front, he raised up to caution the men, saying, “Boys, lie down or you’ll surely be hit,” when he himself received the fatal wound spoken of above.

¹² Article in the New Orleans Pelia, via History of Rutland County, Vermont – Smith & Rann

He anticipated his fate and in his pocket was found a paper written at the close of the first day of July, giving directions for a disposition of his property and bidding farewell to his betrothed. His remains were subsequently removed to Vermont and interred in the Catholic Cemetery (St. Bridget's) at West Rutland."

Rutland Notables Who Served

To include all Rutland citizens who served gallantly in the Civil War would be a daunting task, and one which would occupy space in many quarterly volumes. We have settled on presenting a few in each of the dedicated volumes through the multi-year period of commemoration.

In this first Civil War issue, we present some of the men who were in command of forces of the 2nd Vermont Brigade, leading up to and at the Battle of Gettysburg.

There was Wheelock G. Veazey, the commanding officer of the 16th Vermont Regiment (featured in the Medal of Honor piece of this Quarterly), and William T. Nichols, the commanding officer of the 14th Vermont Regiment, both of which units were key factors in the repulsing of Pickett's charge, a result that is credited with turning the tide of the war.

Then, there was Redfield Proctor, the commanding officer of the 15th Vermont Regiment, and Levi G. Kingsley, a ranking officer (Major) of the 12th Vermont Regiment, both of which units were on guard duty at Gettysburg, and stood ready to serve if called upon.

Former members of the Rutland Light Guards were present in many of the units which served with distinction, and some gave their lives to preserve the Union. It is intended that we will present these men and their contributions in forthcoming Quarterlies.

In this issue, we feature Mr. Nichols and Mr. Kingsley.

William T. Nichols

William T. Nichols was born in Clarendon, Rutland County in 1829. After secondary education, he commenced the study of law in Rutland. He was admitted to the bar in 1852 and took up the practice of law, advancing rapidly and being elected State's Attorney for Rutland County.

Mr. Nichols was one of three brothers to serve in the Civil War.

¹³ Ancestry.com-US Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles (Roster of VT Volunteers:War of the Rebellion 1861-66, History of the 13th Vermont Volunteers, These Honored Dead: The Union Casualties at Gettysburg)

At the beginning of the war, Mr. Nichols enlisted in the First Vermont Regiment (with the Rutland Light Guards) and, later, reenlisted in the 14th Infantry. He entered service with the 14th as a private, and was quickly elected to the position of Colonel and assumed command of the unit. He would remain the commanding officer of the 14th throughout his entire term of service, which ended when the unit was mustered out. In December, 1862 the 14th, by then part of the 2nd Brigade, participated in actions against forces led by confederate General Jeb Stuart.



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During the Battle of Gettysburg, the 14th Infantry was one of the units that formed the defense (under General Stannard) against Pickett's Charge. It "marched 120 miles in 6 days, reaching Emmettsburg, Md., on the 30th. It arrived on the battlefield too late to share in the first day's fighting and encamped for the night in a wheat field to the left of Cemetery hill. On the afternoon of the 2nd day it went into action on the left center, where it remained during the remainder of the battle. Its chief loss was sustained on the 3d day during the splendid charge of Pickett's men. The 14th behaved with the steadiness and gallantry of veteran troops, executing a number of difficult movements while under a heavy fire of artillery and musketry. Its casualties were 18 killed, 9 mortally and 65 severely wounded, the heaviest loss in killed and wounded sustained by any regiment in the brigade."¹⁴

Upon the end of the service requirement, the unit was mustered out on 30 July 1863. Throughout the difficult times and fierce fighting, not one man was lost to desertion, a tribute to the unit's leadership.

After the war, Mr. Nichols had success in many varied endeavors. He was twice elected to the Senate of Vermont, being the youngest member ever in the Senate at that time. Mr. Nichols was (and is) recognized as a visionary, with regard to the possibilities for Rutland's future directions and successes. Many of his ideas came to fruition as the city developed.

In 1865, one of Mr. Nichols' business ventures caused him and his brother to be on board the ill-fated SS Republic, which sunk en-route from New York to New Orleans, with great wealth aboard. Mr. Nichols survived, only to learn that while this was taking place, his daughter May had died, and shortly thereafter also his wife.

¹⁴ "Vermont in the Civil War", VermontCivilWar.org/index.php

[The stories of the SS Republic and of passenger William T. Nichols were told by National Geographic in a feature article about sunken treasure; this story was also captured by the organization Odyssey Marine Exploration. References to these materials are footnoted.]¹⁵

Mr. Nichols left the Rutland area in 1868, and with his second wife and two children eventually relocated in Maywood, Illinois. He had great success there, as an innovator. He had ingenuity and skill with machinery and farm equipment, and was able to make improvements to existing tools. He is credited for the introduction of the “Maywood Scraper and Ditcher”, and also the Pulverizer.

Mr. Nichols died in 1882. His body was returned to Rutland, and he is buried in Evergreen Cemetery.

[William T. Nichols was the author of a letter published in the Rutland Herald, recounting details of the battle which was the first encounter of Vermont troops in the war. Interest in and support for the war in the North ran high, and this letter served to provide details that otherwise may have been misinterpreted. As Colonel (then Private) Nichols points out in the letter: “I felt it a duty to place before our friends as soon as possible, the material facts connected with the fortunes of the day.” Nichols’ letter is presented on the Rutland Historical Society website www.rutlandhistory.com].¹⁶

The sources for this section were the Rutland Daily Herald¹⁷ and “Vermont in the Civil War”.

Levi G. Kingsley

Levi G. Kingsley was born in Shrewsbury, Rutland County in 1832, the eldest son of Harvey and Elvira Gleason Kingsley. He lived with his family in the area, and was educated locally, including at Brandon Seminary and Norwich University.

In 1858, after working different jobs in Rutland, Mr. Kingsley in partnership with Benjamin F. French bought a hardware store in Rutland that would start a career in business that lasted over forty years.

At about that time, Mr. Kingsley became a member of the Rutland Light Guards. He “was elected lieutenant of the company in 1859, and responded with the company in 1861 to the call for troops, joining the

¹⁵ <http://www.shipwreck.net/colwilliamnichols.php>

<http://www.shipwreck.net/ssrepublichistoricaloverview.php>

“Lost Gold – Bounty for a Civil War Ship” National Geographic, Sep 2004.

¹⁶ The Rutland Daily Herald, June 20, 1861.

¹⁷ The Rutland Daily Herald, April 17, 1882.

1st regiment of Vermont volunteers. He went to the field as second lieutenant of company K of Rutland and served with credit at Fortress Monroe and Newport News, Va., during the regiment's three month's term. He re-enlisted with many members of the old company in 1862, being elected captain. On the organization of the 12th Vermont volunteers, he was promoted to the rank of major, which he held until the expiration of his term of service."¹⁸



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The 12th infantry became part of the 2nd Brigade and was at the Battle of Gettysburg. The unit, on guard duty, did not see action.

In 1865, Mr. Kingsley was elected captain of the Vermont National Guard, Company A, 9th Regiment and subsequently he became colonel of the regiment. He was elected to the rank of Brigadier General in 1882 and again in 1884. The Rutland Company of the Vermont National Guard was named the Kingsley Guard, in General Kingsley's honor.

Mr. Kingsley was also an active member of the Roberts Post of the GAR, serving as commander for two terms.

In 1874 he was elected Quartermaster General of Vermont, a position he held until 1882. During his time as Quartermaster, he made many improvements in the department and was cited for excellence at the time he relinquished the position.

Mr. Kingsley was active in politics and community affairs, and held official positions almost too numerous to list - President of the Village of Rutland in 1886, Selectman of Rutland Town, Mayor of Rutland City in 1894, State Senator from Rutland County in 1890. In business and community, he was a director of the Baxter National Bank, a trustee of the Marble Savings Bank, captain of the Killington Steam Fire Engine company, an official with the Knights Templar, a trustee of Norwich University, a member of the Masons and vestryman of Trinity Church.

When he sold his business on Merchant's Row in 1905, he had been in business continuously in Rutland for 46 years.

Mr. Kingsley died on 26 September 1915, and is buried in Evergreen Cemetery, Rutland.¹⁹

¹⁸ Rutland Daily Herald, June 28, 1915

¹⁹ Sources for this section: History of Rutland County, VT Smith & Rann and Rutland Daily Herald, June 28, 1915



The Kingsley Guard, shown in camp at St. Johnsbury in 1883. The officer with the full beard in the center is General Kingsley.

The Southern Odyssey of a Rutland Son's Family

Betsey Royce was the daughter of Moses Strong Royce and Martha Broyles Royce. She kept and published memoirs (entitled "A Genteel Spy") about the tragic four-year period during which the family was homeless and eventually destitute in the defeated South.

The story also involves the notable Rutlander Capt. Edmund A. Morse, whose wife was the sister of Moses Strong Royce. Hearing of the troubles of the Royces, Morse dispatched the considerable sum of \$200 to help the family get back on their feet.

The letter that accompanied the money proves once again that family ties transcend all other allegiances, even those that bring about great wars. It is reproduced as follows:

New Orleans, La.
July 6, 1865

Dear Moses,

The fight is over and it only remains for us to shake hands and start over again, which I am sure we will both do. Included is a draft for \$200, which any bank will cash for you. It is a joint gift from your mother, Jane, and me. We know that the bottom has fallen out of

the South and we suppose that you and your family are stranded at Hollow Square, where we last heard from you. I suppose you will return to Franklin. My work here is drawing to an end and I expect to be mustered out soon. After that, I shall take my family back to Rutland.

Let us hear from you.

Yours,

signed Edmond (sic) Morse

Review of “A Genteel Spy” (by Carolynn Ranftle)

A Genteel Spy is based on memoirs of Betsey Royce, who, while a student at Wellesley College in the 1870s, records childhood memories of life during the Civil War, ten years earlier. The manuscript was passed down through family and recently published. Betsey’s granddaughter, Judith Riker Damon, is the editor and illustrator.

Betsey’s father, Moses, grew up in Rutland, the son of Betsey Strong Royce and the grandson of Moses Strong. He graduated from UVM, but moved south because of poor health. He studied Divinity while working in Greeneville, Tennessee, and there he met his future wife, Martha Broyles, who is the “Genteel Spy” for whom the book is named. Martha and Moses married, and moved to Franklin Tennessee, where Moses became pastor of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church. Martha and Moses had two children, Betsey and her younger sister, Sally.

In 1861 Martha, along with other town women, began “spying” for the Confederate army by passing along information about the occupying Union soldiers. Betsey was called upon to carry messages sewn into the hem of her dress. In 1862 Moses joined the Confederate army as a Scout, leaving behind his family and home. He would be able to show allegiance to his adopted South, but at the same time not have to fear direct battle with members of his family.

Martha and her two young daughters fended for themselves, hiding in the cellar as their house was bombarded with “minies”, soft lead bullets which had devastating effects on those they struck. The Union soldiers, aware of Martha’s spying, soon ordered the Royce women to leave Franklin. Packing up their belongings, they spent several perilous days travelling to Martha’s parents, who owned a large plantation in Greeneville called “Walnut Hill”.

In the meantime Moses was captured and held at the Military Prison in Nashville. He was accused of guerilla activities and sentenced to die. He wrote to his mother in Rutland and to Martha, asking for help.



MARTHA BROYLES ROYCE

A GENTLE SPY, EDITED AND ILLUSTRATED BY
JUDITH RIKER DIMON, COPYRIGHT 2010.



SEN. MOSES STRONG ROYCE

A GENTLE SPY, EDITED AND ILLUSTRATED BY
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The Royces: Martha Broyles Royce and Moses Strong Royce, and Captain Edmund Morse

Upon receiving the letter, Martha undertook a 650 mile round-trip journey to meet with President Jefferson Davis. He promised that Moses would be spared.

Anticipating the Union army's advance to Greeneville, Martha and the two girls moved on to Marshallville, Georgia, first enduring the constant taunts of an insane Confederate widow, then living in a sweltering eight foot square shed room during the height of summer.

Meanwhile Moses escaped on 29 February 1864. He rejoined the army and after hearing about his family's whereabouts, obtained a leave to see them. He found Marshallville to be unsafe, so they travelled together to a tiny outreach in Alabama, where he procured a place for them to live. Moses then went back to Tennessee and continued to serve the Confederate Army. Their new home was not what they had hoped for. It was a plantation run by a cruel miserly woman. The slaves were poorly treated. The Royces had little to eat, but the family endured as they had done in the past.

In 1865, Martha and the girls finally received word that the war was over. Moses returned once more, having walked 500 miles and still wearing the shoes his Rutland mother had sent him while in prison.

They were without money or supplies and again family came to the rescue with a \$200 gift from Rutland family, including the notable, Captain Edmund A. Morse, who was married to Moses' sister and was now stationed in New Orleans. They packed their meager belongings for another long arduous trip. Spirits were high though, as they were now returning home.

After close calls with horse thieves and bands of robbers, they finally reached Franklin and were welcomed by the few remaining townspeople.

ple they knew. A major battle had taken place on their property; their house had been destroyed and their land was filled with graves of fallen soldiers. They decided they could not live there.

Fortunately, Moses was given the opportunity to start a new school in one of the large plantation homes. Eventually he went back to preaching. While ministering to the sick during the cholera outbreak of 1873, he succumbed to the disease. Martha and her nearly grown daughters returned once more to Walnut Hill.

Betsey and Sally were invited to Vermont to become acquainted with their father's family and continue their education, which the family provided. Betsey was in the first graduating class of Wellesley College in 1875. Later they both moved to other states, Sally (now a widow), with her mother to North Carolina, and Betsey with her husband and family to Maryland.

Families with divided loyalties were not uncommon during the Civil War, though it occurred more often in the middle states. This is a story of a combined North and South family, whose support for each other throughout and after the war transcended the brutal ravages brought about by a country divided unto itself. And it is the story of a courageous woman who more than once stood up for her allegiances, while at the same time protecting her family during the wandering and hardships of the war years.²⁰

For Further Reading

A number of books can be found on the free Internet Archive. Go to "archive.org", select "text" and place the book title in the search box at the top. You may read the book on-line or you may also download the complete book in a few minutes. It is all FREE.

Rutland Historical Society Quarterlies related to the Civil War are available on our web site (rutlandhistory.com).

²⁰ Source for this section: "A Genteel Spy", edited and illustrated by Judith Riker Damon, copyright 2010.